

# The Effect of Acts of Compassion Within Organizations on Corporate Reputation : Contributions to Employee Volunteering

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## <요 약>

This paper explores a theoretical framework, in which compassion arising from others' suffering among organizational members can be connected to EV to CSR activities via POI. We argue that compassion may generate positive identity related to being a member of a particular organization (i.e., POI), which increases to EV to CSR, ultimately leading to the enhancement of the corporate reputation. In return, an enhanced reputation for the corporation results in an increase of employees' perceived organizational identity via increase of CEI. Employees with high POI are more likely to carry out compassion and share it with others within an organization. In short, the positive circulation between compassion and EV to CSR as shown in Figure 2 demonstrates not only the ways in which compassion among organizational members can evoke EV to CSR through POI, but also how EV to CSR can facilitate compassion within an organization in terms of enhanced corporate reputation.

Key Words: compassion, positive organizational identity, employee volunteering, constructed external image, corporate reputation

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## I. Introduction

Interests about corporate social responsibility (CSR) have increased significantly during the last two decades. In order to answer under what conditions corporations are more likely to engage in socially responsible ways, most of the prior studies have examined the determinants of CSR at the organizational level in terms of organizational characteristics, such as the financial condition of the firm, competition level, corporate culture, organizational structure, leadership, and several institutional factors (Brown and Perry, 1994; Campbell, 2007; Waddock and Graves, 1997). However, few studies have focused on investigating how employee behaviors at the individual level are intrinsically motivated to trigger positive social change and environmental sustainability through CSR acts, and what gives them the inspiration to move their CSR acts beyond direct tangible benefits (Campbell, 2007; Ullman, 1985).

One of the most important and enduring features in CSR is employee volunteering (EV) whereby employees in firms as 'good citizens' give back to their communities, and take responsibility for improving companies' community and employee relations (Peterson, 2004). EV is an increasingly salient form of companies' community involvement programs for encouragement of staff involvement in the local community, which is either employer-initiated or employee-led (Lukka, 2000).

Although the extent and strategy of EV are

versatile for each corporation, its fundamental philosophy is based on any discretionary individual or group activity intended to stimulate positive social change and further social welfare beyond their interests (Aguilera, Rupp, Williams and Ganapathi, 2007; McWilliams and Siegel, 2001). EV to CSR consequently fulfills philanthropic love, care, and concern that provide connections to our community, society, and environment. In this respect, EV can be conceptualized as another type of compassion toward its external environment where employees within a firm respond to those societal problems and issues to achieve social/environmental changes through active good will.

Although no single definition of compassion is sufficient for all situations, most scholars agree that compassion includes not only connection to others in times of trouble and suffering in terms of both cognitive consciousness and affective empathy, but also caring for those others (Dutton, Frost, Worline, Lilius and Kanov, 2002; Dutton, Worline, Frost and Lilius, 2006; Solomon, 1998). Consistent with the consequences of EV to CSR (i.e., helping or promoting community under suffering or poverty by establishing business-community partnerships and sharing best practices in EV), individual compassion inside an organization provides sources of care and healing for those members with misfortune or suffering within organizations (Dutton et al., 2002; Wuthnow, 1991).

As an empathetic emotional response to sufferings, individual compassion within

organizations plays an important role in determining the level of EV to CSR through positive organizational identity (POI), which is a positive identity associated with their membership in an organization. Moreover, employees' higher commitment to EV may enhance corporate reputation in terms of the expansion of social capital. Social capital refers to the resources embedded in a social structure derived from networks of relationships among individuals, organizations, communities, or societies (Adler and Kwon, 2002; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1993). Social capital is reflected by the structure and strength of interpersonal relationships in a social system (Adler and Kwon, 2002; Coleman, 1988; Lin, 2001).

The principle contributions of this paper are to provide a theoretical framework of how individual compassion in organizations affects EV to CSR through POI, which eventually increases corporate reputation. Enhanced corporate reputation positively influences organizational identity among employees, which consequently facilitates compassion among members within an organization since employees with POI are more likely to develop pro-social identity, drawing on social identity theory.

Overall, our study explores a model of positive circulation between individual compassion and EV to CSR; how individual

compassions within an organization influence EV to CSR through POI, moderated by organizational identity orientation (i.e., individual, relational, and collectivistic orientation), which ultimately contributes to the enhancement of corporate reputation, and how enhanced corporate reputation, in turn, facilitates individual compassion acts through POI.

## II. COMPASSION

We present our compassion model in Figure 1, built on the premise that experiences of pain and compassion are fundamental to being human. As human institutions, organizations' members inevitably experience emotional pain and suffering in the organization where they work (Dutton, Frost, Worline, Lilius and Kanov, 2002; Frost and Robinson, 1999; Frost, Dutton, Worline and Wilson, 2000). We argue that compassion, elicited from noticing, feeling, and acting as a response to others' suffering within an organization stimulates EV to CSR acts through POI, which eventually affects the corporate reputation. We outline the contours for a general framework of bridging compassion within an organization and EV to CSR to enhance corporate reputation in Figure 1.



**Figure 1**  
**Bridging between compassion and EV to CSR for**  
**enhancing corporate reputation**

### 1. Compassion at Work

Historically, rationality has become a primary focus of organizational studies, and emotions in the workplace have been issues disregarded in studies of organizational behavior (Mastenbroek, 2000; Muchinsky, 2000; Taylor, 1911). Recently, there has been a growing school of thought that a consideration of emotion and affect in organizations, rather than exclusive concentration on the rational and systematic perspectives to see organizations, contributes to organizational success. A shift from bounded rationality that underlines reasoning and decision making to bounded emotionality that emphasizes care, altruism, and compassion sheds new light on organizational studies.

There are compelling practical reasons for scholars and practitioners to give more attention to emotional aspects, particularly compassion in the workplace. Organizations are currently faced with a severe economic crisis and the highest unemployment rates in recent history, scarcity of natural resources, intense competition, corporate downsizing, and an increase of threats to our natural environment.

Correspondingly, employees within organizations suffer from many sources outside and within their respective organization (i.e., natural disasters, human-made disasters, personal tragedies, and job stressors) (Dutton, Worline, Frost and Lilius, 2006). Cassell (1982) defined suffering as a state of severe distress associated with events that threatens the intactness of the person at an individual, an organizational, and a national level.

A serious level of suffering residing in an organization causes enormous financial, psychological, and social costs for organizations and their members (Frost, 2003). Ignorance about employee's suffering is even more costly. As the "heart's response to others' suffering" (Kornfield, 1993), compassion plays an important role in organizational life by reducing or alleviating others' suffering or pain within labor organizations (Dutton et al., 2002; Dutton et al., 2006; Frost et al., 2006; Kanov, Maitlis, Worline, Dutton, Frost and Lilius, 2004). Scholars widely agree that compassion involves sympathetic consciousness of others' distress and suffering, and caring for those others often in communicative or behavioral ways. Kornfield (1993) defines

compassion as “the heart’s response to sorrow” (p. 326). Kanov et al.(2004) define compassion as a relational process of noticing another person’s suffering, experiencing an emotional empathy to his or her pain, and behaving in some way that alleviates his or her pain.

Regardless of its motive, compassion is often seen as an emotional expression or a certain helping-behavior of displaying warmth, love, and kindness to others who are suffering. In this article, we define compassion as a true feeling of emotional work where an individual sees through the eyes of others, hears with the ears of others, feels with the heart of others, and acts in a manner that demonstrates his or her own compassion (Michael, 1995).

## 2. Compassion and Identity

Individuals express their experiences and feelings in organizations through stories or narratives (Bruner, 1986; Frost et al., 2006). Compassion is also conveyed in a form of stories in a manner that influences the identities of individuals and collectives. The stories of compassion which exist in many aspects of organizational life are captured, stored, and told among organization members, ultimately shaping organizational identity (Frost et al., 2006). Narratives provide a powerful window of building upon the individual’s organizational identity (Gergen, 1998). Gecas (1982) conceptualizes the self-concept as “an organization (structure) of

various identities and attributes...developed out of the individual’s reflexive, social, and symbolic activities” (p. 4). Individuals’ identities are shaped by social interactions including membership in social groups, distinguishing personal characteristics, and social roles (Bednar et al., 2011; Tajfel, 1974). According to Tajfel (1974, p.63), “social identity is part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his [or her] knowledge of his [or her] membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership.” Bednar et al. (2011) define an individual’s organizational identity as a part of an individual’s self-concept, which comes from being a member of a work organization. In this respect, compassion narratives are told and retold through the organization, which constructs or changes employees’ self-concepts and perceptions about their organization.

This article argues that compassion among employees may generate positive identity related to being a member of a particular organization (i.e., POI), as shown in Figure 1. The narratives of compassion acts, as they circulate through the organization, develop a shared recognition of the value that employees are truly cared for by their organizations. Employees who experience compassion will talk about how they are genuinely treated by their organization, such as gestures of emotional support, providing material goods, or giving work flexibility, to other employees. As narratives of compassion are shared, they construct employees’ perceptions of their

organizations in positive ways, seeing their organization as a care-providing system (Kahn, 1993), and a source of social support and healing (House, 1981; Frost, 2003). Lilius et al. (2008) have found that experienced compassion at work is positively associated with the frequent inducement of positive emotion at work, and affective organizational commitment. According to Dutton et al. (2010), positive identity refers to a self-definition that is favorable or valuable in some way, which is strongly correlated with compassion, universal virtues, and strengths like courage (Ko and Moon, 2014). Thus we argue that the experience of compassion among members would have strong relationships with a more positive identity associated with their membership in an organization (POI).

### III. Bridging INDIVIDUAL Compassion and EV TO CSR FOR enhancing corporate reputation

#### 1. Compassion on EV to CSR through POI

As shown in Figure 1, we conceptualize that the organizational members who experience compassion are more likely to perceive their organization positively (POI), which develops the intrinsic motivation to raise EV to CSR. Organizational members with POI tend to pursue even higher levels of

organizational identity, image, and reputation from society. Drawing from social identity theory (i.e., social identification, and social categorization), POI from compassion elicits members' intrinsic motivations for further development of organizational identity, (Ellemer et al., 2004). The fundamental concept of social identity theory is that people cognitively identify themselves and others by categorizing individuals into groups (Ellemer et al., 2004; Tajfel, 1974; 1975).

From the perspective of social identity theory, individuals are strongly motivated to enhance their organization's identity when they think of themselves as members of a collective group or organization with a positive identity in order to maintain their prestigious images (Ellemer et al., 2004). Social categorization would lead members of one group to favor the in-group at the expense of the out-group, and then POI encourages individuals to increase their organization's identity enhancing behavior, such as CSR (Ellemer et al., 2004; Dutton et al., 2010). Thus increasing EV to CSR is one of the most common methods to promote an actual reputation of an organization, and to improve its identity within an organization (Turban and Greening, 1996).

It has been the mainstream in both micro- and macro-organizational theories that POI is a fundamental derivation for changes of human behavior and organizational activity (Dutton et al., 2010). At the micro level, adjusting individuals' behavior to an organization is motivated by the desire to build an individual identity that is internally and externally

perceived as worthwhile or important in some way (Ellemers et al., 2004; Tajfel, 1974; 1975). From the evaluative perspective on positive identity (Dutton et al., 2010), individuals wish to be positively viewed from others and themselves (Baumeister, 1999) and to enhance their identity in order to favorably distinguish themselves from others (Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears and Doosje, 1999; Hogg and Terry, 2000). Thus, individual identities play an important role in developing and maintaining a sense of self-worth and self-esteem (Gecas, 1982).

From the macro perspective, POI is a core mechanism leading to organizational change in terms of organizational identification that refers to the degree to which individuals define themselves as organizational members and believe that they and the organization are identical (Ashforth and Mael, 1996; Dutton et al., 1994; Dutton et al., 2010). According to the structural perspective on positive identity (Dutton et al., 2010), an individual's positive identity is shaped by the interactions between personal identities and social identities. Personal identity refers to the distinct characteristics of the self as a persisting entity (Ashmore et al., 2004), while social identity is a self-categorization into groups or organization that makes individuals understand their identities in terms of social dimensions (i.e., particular group membership) (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). If these two kinds of identities do not fit each other, it creates emotional/cognitive dissonance or tensions that force individuals to achieve a balance between

assimilation and differentiation in order to remove tension and dissonance (Brewer and Gardner, 1996). The state of optimal balance between personal identity and social identity is said to be positive identity since it enables the individual to satisfy conflicting identity needs (Kreiner and Sheep, 2009). Individuals tend to identify with social identity groups that will promote and maintain their positive personal identity, and pursue identity enhancing behavior once their identity is hurt or threatened (Brewer, 1991).

For example, in the study of the Port Authority from which Dutton and Dukerich's (1991) research was drawn, they found that the Port Authority (PA)'s members possessed high expectations toward their company as a professional organization with a uniquely technical expertise for social service activities. The PA members perceived the organization as distinctive in terms of being a first-class and high-quality institution, which created an important source of their high self-esteem. However, the PA's failure to act on problems with the homeless severely damaged its actual reputation and identity. Once the PA members experienced threats to a positive identity of their organization, they strived for the recovery of its identity and image. The social construction and maintenance of a positive organizational identity are a crucial causal factor for the movement of the PA's members away from reactive and passive attitudes about the homelessness issue toward more active and progressive activities to deal with the homeless problem (Dutton and Dukerich, 1991).

In short, compassion generates POI in terms of a high level of organizational identification, leading to more commitment for the organization's identity-enhancing behavior such as EV to CSR.

## 2. EV to CSR and Corporate Reputation through Social Capital

The CSR literature has shown that firms' CSR is positively associated with their corporate reputations and their attractiveness as employers (Aguilera et al., 2007; Orlitzky, Schmidt and Rynes, 2003; Turban and Greeting, 1996). More specifically, the preceding discussion has suggested that firms whose employees actively engaged in CSR provide a positive signal to the public so that they are viewed as more attractive and positive entities in society due to high-quality relationships between employees and community (i.e., social capital) (Adler and Kwon, 2002; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1993).

Coleman (1988) and Putnam (1993) both suggest that individual behavior (i.e., employee community involvement) plays an important role in developing social capital within communities and neighborhoods. Social capital may be created from the motivation of employees to help communities beyond their job descriptions, demonstrate the goodwill for the good of the society, and take an authentic interest in enhancing the organization's image and reputation (Putnam, 1993). Based upon the assumption that social capital is essential for

the functioning of organizations, EV to CSR are likely to develop social capital, which ultimately may enhance organizational reputation through their relationship with social capital. In other words, we propose that EV to CSR help develop and sustain social capital within firms, which, in turn, generates positive corporate reputation.

## 3. Theoretical Framework of interactions between compassion and EV to CSR

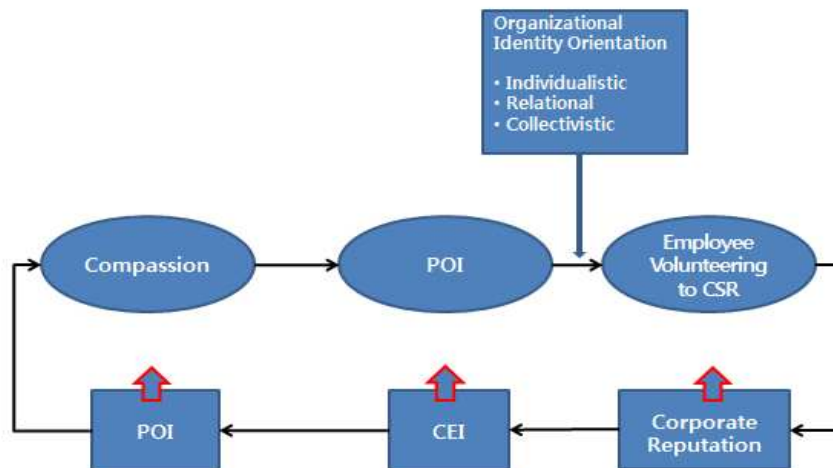
In this section, we develop a theoretical model to explore how individual compassion interacts with EV to CSR through POI, leading to improve corporate reputation, and how enhanced corporate reputation facilitates compassion within an organization in return. As shown in Figure 2, this paper posits that employees of the organization who experience compassion will generate POI, which results in a more rigorous EV to CSR. In return, EV to CSR develops a more positive corporate reputation due to increase in social capital, thus tending to promote employees' constructed external image (CEI). The organizational members' positive CEI will be positively associated with organizational identity. What a member believes is distinctive, core, and enduring about the organization is defined as organizational identity (Dutton, Dukerich and Harquail, 1994). Constructed external image (CEI) refers to members' beliefs about what outsiders think about the organization (Dutton,



Dukerich and Harquail, 1994). The manner in which outsiders (i.e., external social audiences) evaluate members' organizations predominantly influences how members view their organization. For example, employees at 3M perceive their company as innovative since 3M has been considered one of the most innovative companies in the world.

Finally, as shown in Figure 2, POI drawn from CEI facilitates compassion among

members within an organization since employees with POI elicit their intrinsic motivations for further development of self-identity or organizational identity through compassionate acts (Ellemers et al., 2004). Likewise, Figure 2 demonstrates a positive circulation between compassion and EV to CSR through the dynamics of organizational identity.



**Figure 2: Positive circulation between compassion and EV to CSR through the dynamics of organizational identity: Moderated by organizational identity orientation**

#### 4. Impact of Compassion on EV to CSR through POI

We begin our analysis by investigating how compassion among members develops POI as shown in Figure 2. Organizational identification

plays an important role in bridging self-concept irrelevant from an organization into organization-related identity (i.e., POI) by providing employees a feeling of oneness with an organization. POI encourages employees to engage in EV to CSR. In the reverse direction,

improved corporate reputation in terms of EV to CSR is positively related to constructed external image (CEI). One premise in our analysis is that the organization members' perceptions about their organization are consciously or unconsciously influenced by what society thinks about this organization (CEI) (Dutton, Dukerich and Harquail, 1994; Ko and Moon, 2013), so that CEI functions as a medium for transmitting outsiders' perceptions (i.e., the general public) about the organization into the perceptions of insiders (i.e., employees) by mirroring corporate images.

In one part of our positive circulation framework, which is summarized in Figure 2, we argue that members who experience compassion (i.e., the receiving end of, bearing witness to, or participating in the delivery of compassion) at work are better able to create POI. For example, individuals who experience compassion under suffering are more likely to effectively manage and exit from their difficult circumstances by reducing anxiety and fostering positive mindsets (Lilius, Kanov, Dutton, Worline and Maitlis, 2011). Existing research shows that compassion affects employees' attitudes and relational perceptions by shaping their sense of their organization where they work as well as colleagues with whom they work (Lilius et al., 2008). Employees' perceptions of the firm's values and whether they believe it cares about their well-being (i.e., perceived organizational support) shape the employees' subsequent identities, attitudes and behaviors toward their organization (Lilius et al., 2011). According to

Lilius et al. (2008), employees who experience compassion within their organization are more likely to make commitments to their organization, perceive their organizations in positive terms, and experience positive emotions at work, which has been positively associated with favourable organizational outcomes.

A positive impact of compassion at work reaches employees who witness it or actually offer it as well as employees who receive it. The organization members' perceptions about their organization are influenced not only by the degree to which they receive compassion, but also by the extent to which they witness interpersonal treatment of colleagues (Lilius et al., 2008; Lilius et al., 2011). For example, witnessing others receiving compassion or engaging in virtuous action evokes a positive emotion that leads others to desire to participate in compassionate activities. In addition, those who participate in the delivery of the compassion are also positively influenced through the satisfaction caused from the behavior of helping others (Lilius et al., 2011). Recent empirical research suggests that compassion provisions tend to reduce an individual's physiological stress and mental fatigue at work by engendering compassion satisfaction (Stamm, 2002). In a similar vein, we suggest that employees who experience compassion at work are more likely to develop employees' positive identities related to being members of a particular organization (POI), as shown in Figure 2.

Proposition 1: compassion among employees will be positively associated with POI.

Engaging in compassion at work (i.e., receiving, witnessing compassion, and engaging in the delivery of compassion as a response to the suffering of others) allows employees to develop and maintain their moral identity (Aquino and Reed, 2002) or a type of virtuous identity (Dutton, Roberts and Bednar, 2010). According to the virtue perspective on positive identity claimed by Dutton et al (2010), acts of compassion are related to positive identity (Ko and Moon, 2015). The organizational member's identity is more likely to be positive when they are engaged in virtuous activities. Experiencing compassion for others is associated with an enhanced POI, which leads to a positive impact on employees' motivations to engage in organizationally or socially supportive behavior, such as CSR (Grant, 2008). Experiencing compassion at work heightens employees' sense of self - another similarity that connects them with their organization, work colleagues, and even ultimately to society (Grant et al., 2008). A high degree of self-other similarity and connection to others, in combination with POI, encourages employees to pay more attention to others (i.e., other colleagues within an organization, and the general public in a society). POI drawn from compassion facilitates employees' capability for cooperation among inside members as well as outside social groups or audiences, creating relational resources, sustaining shared values, and developing critical relational skills (Dutton,

Lilius and Kanov, 2007).

As mentioned earlier, positive identity brings about changes of human behavior and organizational activity (Dutton et al., 2010). The evaluative perspective on positive identity assumes that organizational identity becomes more positive when employees are motivated to be viewed more favorably by themselves or by others (Dutton et al., 2010). Correspondingly, employees try to promote their identity to favorably distinguish themselves from others. Employees with positive identity not only make more of a commitment to help other colleagues under suffering within an organization, so that they create and maintain a sense of self-worth, and self-esteem (Gecas, 1982), but also aim for a high degree of organizational reputation that is favorably perceived by society. Based upon social identity theory, POI evokes members' intrinsic motivations for further enhancement of organizational identity or reputation, and accomplishment of an organization's goal (Ellemers et al., 2004). Consequently, the organizational members with POI are more likely to engage in EV to CSR spontaneously for further enhancing their organization's identity.

As one of many efforts to obtain approval from society and improve its external image/reputation, the organizational members generally conduct CSR. Firms whose employees are engaging in socially responsible corporate behavior possess more positive reputations, and are viewed as more attractive to society, thereby offering those firms with a

competitive advantage (Turban and Greening, 1996). From this perspective, the organizational members with POI are intrinsically motivated to engage in EV to CSR, as shown in Figure 2.

Proposition 2: POI will be positively associated with EV to CSR.

When members with POI tend to be more actively engaged in EV to CSR, another important factor that moderates the relationship between POI and EV to CSR is organizational identification orientation, as shown in Figure 2. According to Brickson (2000; 2005), employees choose one of three organizational identity orientations: individualistic, relational, and collectivistic. Organizational identity refers to what members think about their organization's central, distinctive, and enduring qualities (Albert and Whetten, 1985), while organizational identity orientation is defined as the nature of relations between an organization and its stakeholders [i.e., individual (independent), relational (dyadically interdependent), or collectivistic (derived from a common group membership)] (Brickson, 2000; 2005).

Organizational identity orientations generate particular patterns of relations with external (e.g., customers, suppliers, competitors, nonprofit organizations, etc.) and internal stakeholders (members) and engender a fundamental source of potential to develop certain forms of social value (Brickson, 2005). Depending on how an individual defines his or

her organization in terms of its relations with the external society, organizational identity orientations are determined. First, members' perception of the organization as a unique individual entity characterized by organizational traits that differentiate it from other entities reflects an individualistic identity orientation (Brickson, 2005). Individuals with an individualistic identity orientation stress the maximization of their own organization's profit, status, and welfare. Second, perceiving the organization as an inter-entity partner characterized by organizational traits that connect it dyadically to particular stakeholders reflects a relational identity orientation (Brickson, 2005). A relational identity orientation emphasizes promoting the welfare of a particular group and sustaining these relationships. Finally, perceiving the organization as part of a huge collective society characterized by organizational traits that connect it to a larger whole society reflects a collectivistic identity orientation (Brickson, 2005). A collectivistic identity orientation focuses on maximizing the community's or society's overall welfare.

In this respect, organizational identity orientation may influence the extent, to which members with POI are motivated to participate in EV to CSR. For example, members with an individualistic identity orientation are less likely to be motivated for EV to CSR since they only emphasize their own organization's self-interest or welfare, rather than pay attention to altruistic CSR for the society as a whole. Members with a relational identity

orientation are more concerned with EV to CSR than those with an individualistic identity orientation due to its traits that emphasize maximizing another group's welfare and benefits. Yet, members who are most proactively pursuing EV to CSR may be those with a collectivistic identity orientation since they connect the organization to a larger, more impersonal group for greater collective welfare. Thus, this paper proposes that the relationship between members with POI and EV to CSR is stronger when the organizational identity orientation is shifting from an individualistic to a collectivistic identity orientation.

Proposition3: Organizational identity orientation (i.e., individualistic, relational, and collectivistic) will moderate the relationship between POI and EV to CSR.

## 5. Impact of EV to CSR on Compassion through POI

In another part of our positive circulation framework, as shown in Figure 2, we demonstrate how EV to CSR facilitates compassion within an organization through the organizational identity process shaped by changes in corporate reputation. EV to CSR may enhance corporate reputation since it expands social capital that is derived from close interpersonal relationships among individuals, organizations, communities, or societies, which plays a crucial role in corporate outcomes, such as corporate reputation, product, and brand image, purchase

(re)intention; and customer identification with a firm (Ellen et al., 2006; Lichtenstein, Drumwright and Braig 2004). Correspondingly, most companies attempt to maximize their corporate outcomes, particularly reputations through employee CSR activities so that they develop a better identity and image of their organizations, ingrained in the minds of relevant stakeholders, which leads to a desired reputation (Ellen et al., 2006).

Organizations characterized by high levels of social capital drawn from EV to CSR are more likely to enhance their corporate reputation. Muthuri et al. (2009) found that EV to CSR generate and transact social capital. "Good organizational citizens" such as community-centered behaviors are likely to develop higher levels of social capital (Muthuri et al., 2009). Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) suggest that there are three dimensions of social capital: the structural, the relational and the cognitive dimension. The structural dimension of social capital refers to the overall pattern of relationships between actors. The relational dimension of social capital concerns the nature or quality of personal relationships people have developed with each other. Finally, the cognitive dimension of social capital describes the extent to which people share narratives, interpretations, and a common language among parties. Due to characteristics in each dimension of social capital involved with community, high level of social capital makes collective work easier and encourages economic, social and community development, which ultimately produces higher levels of

organizational performance (i.e., corporate reputation) (Bolino et al., 2002). From this perspective, this paper proposes that EV to CSR leads to a positive corporate reputation as shown in Figure 2.

Proposition 4: EV to CSR will be positively associated with corporate reputation.

Based on social identity theory (Augoustinos and Walker, 1995; Tajfel, 1970; 1974) and symbolic interactionism (Goffman, 1959; 1963), individuals shape their identities in terms of personal and social dimensions. In other words, individuals define their identities not only by comparing unique individual differences with others, but also by interacting with others in various social groups (Tajfel and Turner, 1986). Albert and Whetten (1985) concluded that organizational identity was developed by a procedure of inter-organizational comparisons and reflections upon them over time. Dutton and Dukerich (1991) demonstrated the mirroring process of organizational identities in the images held by their key stakeholders. Dutton and Dukerich (1991) suggest that organizational members' perceived identity in comparison with what outsiders think about organizations (CEI) is greatly influenced by what the external social audiences perceive about their organizations.

For example, if the external audience perceives a certain organization as socially desirable, the members of this organization are likely to be proud of their company and maintain its social reputation. The organization

members' perceived identity about their organization has significant interplay with society's perceptions or expectations toward this organization. Thus we propose that the organization members' belief about what outsiders perceive about their organization (CEI) is directly influenced by the outsiders' own perceptions (social reputation about organization), as shown in Figure 2.

Proposition 5: Corporate reputation will be positively associated with employees' CEI.

Members' cognitive connection with their organization is shaped by images that they have of the organization (Dutton and Dukerich, 1991; Dutton et al., 1994). According to Dutton et al. (1994), what the member believes is distinctive, central, and enduring about the organization (organizational identity) is dominantly affected by what a member believes outsiders perceive about their organization (CEI). These two organizational images interact with each other, which eventually influences member's cognitive connections for creating his or her unique image and identity about the organization and the kinds of behaviors that follow. Organization members use an organization's image developed by CEI to evaluate their corporate reputation. Regarding interactions between POI and CEI, Dutton and Dukerich (1991, p. 550) stated, "...what people see as their organization's distinctive attributes (its identity) and what they believe others see as distinctive about the organization (its image)

constrain, mold, and fuel interpretations ... Because image and identity are constructs that organization members hold in their minds, they actively screen and interpret issues like the Port Authority's homelessness problem and actions like building drop-in centers using these organizational reference points." Thus if employees perceive their organization more positively than what they believe outsiders perceive about their organization, they will be motivated to change either their image or identity in order to reduce the discrepancy. Therefore, we propose that CEI may predominantly influence member's perceived organizational identity, as shown in Figure 2.

Proposition 6: Employees' CEI will be positively associated with their organizational identity.

When a level of POI derived from EV to CSR increases in Figure 2, the organization members can make more positive organizational identification with their organization, which elicits their intrinsic motivation to create a better identity and image of their organization (Ellemers et al., 2004). Employees' perceptions of their EV to CSR affect their organizational identity positively, which also provides a positive impact on their subsequent attitudes and behaviors towards their organizations (Dutton et al., 2010). Research has demonstrated that member's attitudes and behaviors are greatly affected by their perceptions of fairness about their organization (Cropanzano, Byrne, Bobocel

and Rupp, 2001). Thus, we argue that employees develop POI among members, through enhanced perceptions of corporate reputation, which results in positive corporate outcomes such as care, compassion, and well-being. Employees' positive perceptions toward their organization due to enhanced corporate image or reputation will motivate employees to be more internally responsible for each other within an organization, and ultimately trigger and facilitate acts of compassion at work. In this respect, we propose that member's increased POI arising from enhanced corporate reputation will facilitate compassion within an organization in return, as shown in Figure 2.

Proposition 7: Employees' POI will be positively associated with compassion.

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This paper explores a theoretical framework, in which compassion arising from others' suffering among organizational members can be connected to EV to CSR activities via POI. More specifically, we argue that compassion may generate positive identity related to being a member of a particular organization (i.e., POI), which increases to EV to CSR, ultimately leading to the enhancement of the corporate reputation. Employees experiencing compassion have POI so that they are more likely to pursue EV to CSR on behalf of the firm, which results in improving corporate

image or reputation. In return, an enhanced reputation for the corporation results in an increase of employees' perceived organizational identity via increase of CEI. Employees with high POI are more likely to carry out compassion and share it with others within an organization. In short, the positive circulation between compassion and EV to CSR as shown in Figure 2 demonstrates not only the ways in which compassion among members can evoke EV to CSR through POI, but also how EV to CSR can facilitate compassion within an organization in terms of enhanced corporate reputation involved with employees' positive perceptions toward their organization due to EV to CSR.

## 1. Contributions of the Study

Our study contributes to several streams of research. First, this study sheds new light on literature discussing both compassion and CSR since it seeks to bridge the macro concept of CSR with micro research in compassion. CSR is generally treated as a macro-level activity that brings about macro level consequences (Orlitzky, Schmidt and Rynes, 2003), so it has gained little attention within micro level research (i.e., organizational behavior literature). This paper suggests that members of the organization who experience compassion can positively contribute to their CSR activities, which brings compassion into a position of interest for macro researchers. Therefore, this study makes a substantial contribution in that it suggests compassion as

an antecedent variable of employee's CSR activities for the first time, which may enrich CSR literature, while other research has generally studied intellectual stimulation of CEOs (porter and Lawler, 1968), charismatic leadership properties of CEOs (Bass and Steidlmeier, 1999), demographic characteristics (McWilliams and Siegel, 2000), and financial affairs (Orlitzky, Schmidt and Rynes; 2003; Waddock and Graves, 1997) as influential factors on CSR performance so far.

Second, we expand our current understanding of the nomological network of compassion by extending its application to EV to CSR. In other words, our model enriches the literature that inquires about compassion with a limited focus on micro-level outcomes, such as POI and emotions among employees, and organizational commitment by connecting with the macro concept of CSR. Specifically, this paper argues that employees' perceptions about their organization's reputation predominantly shape employees' subsequent attitudes and behaviors for affecting compassion within an organization, which demonstrates a causal effect of EV to CSR on compassion within organizations. Although there have been many studies suggesting that CSR acts have a positive impact on the corporate reputation, our circulative model is one where compassion, an antecedent variable, influences the increase of employees' CSR activities and also leads to the rise of the eventual corporate reputation, an original contribution that serves to enrich the existing body of literature on compassion.



Finally, this paper contributes to the growing field of positive organizational research by identifying POI as a stimulator on EV to CSR, as well as an outcome of compassion. In particular, this paper highlights the uniquely important role of POI in bridging compassion and EV to CSR. Positive work-related identity plays a role as an essential “cog” in the theoretical set of “wheels,” providing a connection between the macro and micro levels. For example, scholars at the micro level have primarily focused on the relationship between POI and individual adjustment/commitment to organizations while researchers at the macro level have only concentrated on impacts of POI on corporate outcomes and institutional changes (Dutton et al., 2010). Our paper, however, provides theoretical mechanisms of POI that help explain both micro and macro phenomena.

## 2. Theoretical and Practical Implication

Enriching compassion within an organization has implications for how individuals perceive their organization, work colleagues, bosses, and, eventually, key organizational outcomes. Beyond the previous studies that have stressed the impact of compassion on members' attitudes and relational perceptions by shaping individuals' sense-making about their organization, this study highlights that compassion can be associated with positive organizational outcomes such as increased EV

to CSR. Thus, this study has an important implication for both micro and macro researchers by theorizing that compassion is no longer limited within a boundary of micro/individual level concerns, but connected with macro/organizational level corporate outcomes, such as an organization's reputation, and stakeholders' intentions to engage in socially supportive behavior.

On a practical level, this study offers new insight for the practitioners (i.e., CEO, top management teams, employees) who deal with CSR activities in organizations that never pay attention to compassion as a driving force for the CSR acts. Our model identifies compassion as a predictor of EV to CSR for enhancing corporate reputation. Community members have positive awareness toward corporations whose employees engage in CSR acts elicited from compassion. Therefore, this study allows practitioners to reconsider the role of compassion for maximizing organizational CSR effects, which satisfies the motivation for public interests (public-serving) as well as the motivation for their own profits (firm-serving).

## 3. Limitations and Future Studies

We acknowledge that our study has limitations that can be addressed by future research. First, our study conceptualizes how compassion interacts with EV to CSR in terms of POI, and vice versa. Due to the lack of specific measure for compassion, few studies on compassion have adopted the quantitative

methodology in examining antecedents and consequences of compassion. Having valid measures for this attribute within organizations will make it easier to study the impacts of compassion on other variables. Thus future study must develop valid measures of compassion and conduct an empirical study for our model.

Second, we focus on compassion at the individual level in our model, which links with EV to CSR in terms of POI as a transit medium. However, future study can examine the process of compassion beyond the individual level. In other words, future study can adopt a conceptualization of compassion at the organizational level, called “organizational compassion or compassion organizing,” defined as an organization’s capability to collectively respond to a certain event involving people’s suffering that is embedded in its current practices, patterns, and processes. (see Dutton et al., 2006; Kanov et al., 2004). Compassion at the individual level becomes collective when it is legitimated, structured, and routinized within an organizational setting, and propagated among members (Kanov et al., 2004). To avoid the possibility of falling into ecological fallacy, it is recommended that future study identify the relationship between two variables (i.e., compassion, and CSR) at the same level.

Finally, an understanding of national culture must take precedence in order to comprehend the characteristics of CSR (Antal and Sobczak, 2007). The reason for this is that the relationship between the corporation and society, and their expectations from each other

are born in the prevailing socio-cultural context, with cultural factors forming stakeholders’ political influence. This paper, however, conceptualizes EV to CSR initiatives through compassion without considering cultural factors, based upon the assumption that compassion is a basic element of human nature. Future studies of EV to CSR initiatives via compassion should be carried out through comparative studies across nations or cultures, since compassion is a dynamic concept that can constantly change not only through external factors (i.e., globalization and international standard operation, and socially responsible investment) but also through internal factors (i.e., each nation’s culture, systems, and historical origins) (Berger and Piore, 1980). Particularly, the degree of society’s expectation toward a corporation and its qualitative practice is determined by various socio-economic factors within the country. Since the concept of CSR is the result of two-fold interactions between internal factors and external factors, carrying out future studies on compassion-based CSR initiatives across cultures will have a huge significance.

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## Abstract

공감의 행위가 기업의 명성에 미치는 영향: 조직 구성원의 자발적 참여를 중심으로

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본 연구는 조직구성원들 사이에서 타인의 고통에 의해 유발되는 공감이 긍정적 조직정체성을 통하여 기업의 사회적 책임 활동에 대한 조직구성원들의 자발적 참여와 어떻게 연결되는지에 대한 이론적 고찰을 하고자 한다. 본 연구에서는 공감이 특별한 조직의 구성원이 되는 것과 관련 있는 긍정적 정체성을 유발시키게 되며, 긍정적 정체성이 기업의 사회적 책임에 대한 조직구성원들의 자발적 참여를 향상시켜 결국에는 기업의 명성을 강화시킨다는 것을 주장하고 있다. 또한, 강화된 기업의 이미지는 구축된 외부 이미지를 통하여 조직구성원들이 지각하는 조직 정체성을 향상시키는 결과를 가져온다. 높은 긍정적 조직 정체성을 지니고 있는 조직 구성원들은 조직 내 구성원들과 함께 나눔과 공감적 행위를 더 잘 실천하게 될 것이다. 결론적으로 기업의 사회적 책임활동에 대한 조직 구성원들의 자발적 참여와 공감 사이의 긍정적 순환 관계는 그림 2에서 보여주고 있듯이 조직 구성원들 간의 공감적 행위가 긍정적 정체성을 통하여 기업의 사회적 책임에 대한 조직구성원들의 자발적 참여를 불러일으키게 된다는 것이다. 또한 그 뿐만 아니라 기업의 명성을 강화시킨다는 측면에서 어떻게 기업의 사회적 책임에 대한 조직구성원들의 자발적 참여가 조직 내 공감적 행위를 유발시킬 수 있을 것인지 그림 2가 설명해 주고 있다.

키워드: 공감, 긍정적 조직 정체성, 조직 구성원의 자발적 참여, 구축된 외부 이미지, 기업의 명성

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